

## **REGION 6 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

TOPIC: CES Environmental Services (4904 Griggs Rd, Houston, Harris County, Texas)

DATE: 5/28/2014

CONTACT: Gary Moore

PURPOSE/ACTION NEEDED: For Information

DEADLINE DATE: N/A

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### **BACKGROUND:**

This is a former environmental waste management company. The company filed bankruptcy in August 2010. The bankruptcy was converted into a Chapter 7 liquidation. A trustee was appointed to liquidate the assets. The owner of the company was convicted of environmental crimes and sentenced to prison. The Site is surrounded by residential/school properties on virtually all sides. The site would be considered an environmental justice site.

The Site contains waste materials from the previous operations of the facility. The facility was vandalized on or about the weekend of March 15, 2014 where a tank was opened and waste was discharged to the ground. In addition, 2 tanker trucks, 1 vacuum box, and 7 roll-off boxes were stolen. The location of the liquid in the tanker trucks is unknown and may have been pumped into onsite tankage or taken off site along with the waste in the vacuum box. The materials in the roll-off were dumped onsite. The City of Houston, Trustee Contractor, and TCEQ responded to the incident. The Trustee primarily addressed these issues. TCEQ activated its contractors to address some additional issues to secure the site to minimize the potential for offsite drainage of chemicals should additional spillage occur.

### **CURRENT STATUS:**

The Site containers are in questionable condition but are being monitored by the Trustee's Contractor and TCEQ. These containers have not been maintained since the facility filed bankruptcy in August 2010. In fact, some of the containers (i.e. vacuum boxes) are not intended for long-term storage and are showing signs of failure. TCEQ currently has the lead on the Site and is coordinating with the Trustee. EPA has been coordinating with TCEQ since early April 2014 and continues to do so.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL/PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS:**

- Potential for exposure to the surrounding population
- Hazardous waste in containers that are in questionable condition
- Historical spillage on the property and within the buildings
- Chemical Odors emanating from the facility
- Site Security

### **TECHNICAL CONCERNS:**

- Chemicals will required transfer from questionable DOT shippable containers to DOT shippable containers
- Ability of Trustee to address the issues on the Site in a timely manner
- Cleanup costs of \$1-2 million

### **REGULATORY/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- Trustee has limited financial resources
- TCEQ Emergency Response Program is currently taking the lead
- TCEQ intends to hand the Site over to EPA Removal Program if Trustee is unable to address

Site conditions.

**COMMUNITY CONCERNS:**

- Community is concerned about the abandoned onsite chemicals and the potential for spillage and community exposure due to deterioration of the containers, vandalism, weather, fire, etc.
- City of Houston is concerned about the potential for exposure to its citizens.

EPA has already met with the City of Houston to discuss the Site and the likely transition to EPA/TCEQ once it is determined that the Trustee will be unable to take necessary actions. EPA/TCEQ will send out a fact sheet/press release upon take-over of the Site.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The TCEQ is currently evaluating a schedule provided by the Trustee to begin to address the Site. EPA will continue to coordinate with TCEQ and the City of Houston.



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